



ILLINOIS ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 12, 1977

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



353495

TO: M.A. Zamco

FROM: J.E. Harms *J.E.H.*SUBJECT: Trekker Chemical Company Investigation
ID #099 055 AAG

RECEIVED

OCT 13 1977

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
DIVISION OF AIR POLLUTION CONTROL
STATE OF ILLINOIS

On September 30, 1977, between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., the author conducted an investigation of the Trekker Chemical Company located near Mendota, Illinois. The Trekker Chemical Company is owned by the Standard Oil Division, American Oil Company. The investigation was prompted by citizen complaints and an inquiry by State Representative Betty Hoxsey from the 38th District, who expressed an interest in the final outcome. The recent complaints stem from a concern that Trekker Chemical may be handling hazardous or toxic substances, and also, that there are obnoxious odors coming from the plant.

Trekker Chemical produces and packages several different liquid and dry pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. Their operation is fairly simple. They receive the raw chemicals from their suppliers and formulate their mixtures in mixing vats to produce their final products. See Attachment I for a list of their final products. On the list the author has added the chemical name to the right of the brand name.

When the author first arrived at the plant, he made contact with the plant manager, Mr. Ken Carbaugh. Mr. Carbaugh informed the author that the plant was not operating because they had just completed a batch of products the day before and were waiting for a tanker that would be bringing more raw chemicals. On this day the author had not noticed an odor from Highway U.S. 51, about 300 feet from the plant, but did detect a small odor inside the plant. This small odor was probably coming from the large quantity of sealed barrels and bags of finish products.

The author informed Mr. Carbaugh that the Agency had received complaints about obnoxious odors coming from the Trekker Chemical plant. Mr. Carbaugh's explanation of the odor problem was that the chemical used to make Trekker's Counter 15-G was producing this odor. He stated that when he began receiving the raw chemical, phorate from a different supplier about a year ago, he began noticing a definite odor. He also stated that whenever he would receive a complaint from the local citizens that he would shut down the operation for making Counter 15-G. Mr. Carbaugh said he has not made Counter 15-G since August 25, 1977.

Mr. Carbaugh informed the author that Trekker Chemical has an air purifier consisting of a charcoal bed filter on order and should be delivered by October 10, 1977, and installed within a week. The plant building, which is 90 feet by 300 feet, is now vented to a baghouse, and shortly, the baghouse will be vented to the air purifier. For the record, Trekker Chemical does not have a construction permit for the charcoal bed filter.

The author is still concerned whether the chemicals that Trekker handles are toxic or hazardous. Via a copy of this memo the Emergency and Episode Response Section is requested to check the list for the above reason and notify the author of their findings.

The author is also concerned with whether the chemicals used at Trekker are photochemically reactive or not. A request to the Permit Section is made for that reason (See Attachment I and notify the author on findings). The author would like to point out that Trekker's permit is due to expire March 27, 1978.

Conclusions:

1. The Agency has received citizen complaints about odors from the Trekker Chemical Company, which handles agricultural pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. There is the possibility that these chemicals are toxic or hazardous. The Episode Section is requested to make that determination.
2. The plant was not operating at the time of the author's investigation, a definite odor was detected in passing by on previous occasions.
3. The plant manager informed the author that Trekker would be installing an air purifier by October 17, 1977, to get rid of the odors. Trekker does not have a construction permit to do so yet.

Recommendations:

1. Get a reply from the Emergency and Episode Response Section on whether the chemicals at Trekker are hazardous or toxic.
2. Get a response from the Permit Section on whether the chemicals are photochemically reactive.
3. Put Trekker on the Flag File.
4. Send Trekker a Form 1 for no construction permit for the air purifier.
5. Make a return investigation to see if the air purifier is installed and working.

JH/cm

cc: J. Coblenz
R.H. Goff
P. Schmierbach